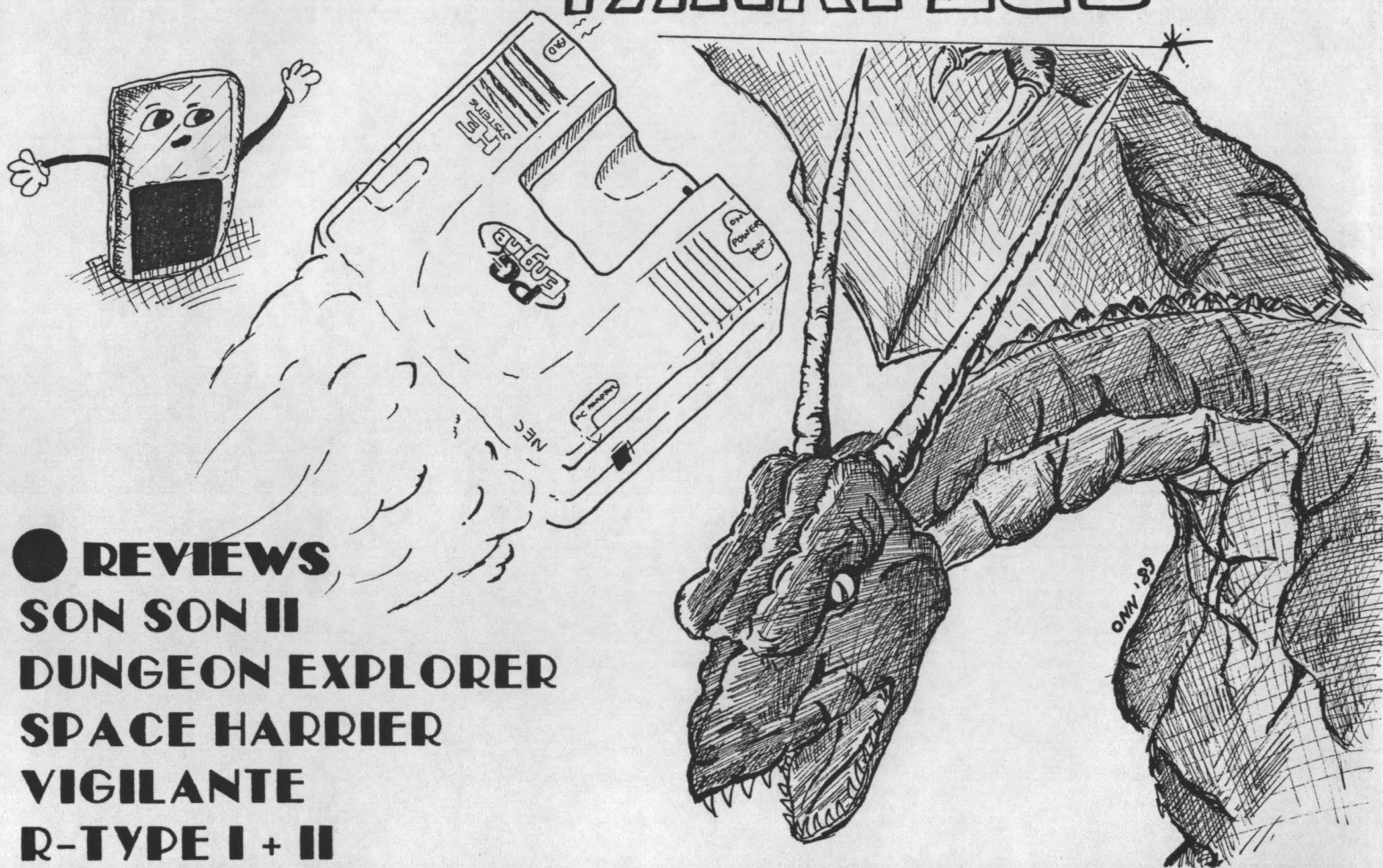A Monthly Newsletter For New Video Gamers

PC Engine FANATICS

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PC Engine Fanatics
A Monthly Newsletter For New Video Gamers
April 1989 Issue 1

Editorial and The Engine

Welcome to the first issue of this newsletter for avid PC Engine users everywhere. The Newsletter was created because there's nothing like it for the PC Engine. This newsletter will try to give the latest infomation on the latest gear for the Engine in the UK, Japan and elsewhere around the world. It will also provide Hints and Tips, solutions and maps of games, software and hi-score charts, etc. We therefore want your help too! If you have just bought a new game for your Engine - tell us what you think of it, send us your hi-scores, Hints & Tips, and so forth.

So what's so special about this tiny machine? The PC Engine was released in Japan over a year a go, and is becoming the most popular games console after the Ninetendo games machine, although with the release of the Sega 16-bit, it does have some competition. In the UK, the Engine has only recently taken off with only a handful of retailers selling the machine at around the 200 pounds mark. In Japan they go for just under 100 which really show how NEC are trying to sell the machine to everyone. In the UK, two models are available - the PAL version, which can be connected to an ordinary TV set, and the Scart version, which can be connected to a monitor or TV with a scart connector. One advantage of the scart version over the PAL is that, the scart interface includes stereo sound leads - so can be connected to audio stereo ampilier, stereo monitor/TV, etc. PAL's sound comes from the TV cable, so will always be in mono (see Tech-Tip for PAL Stereo).   What's inside this little machine and what can it do? **MEMORY:** Unknown, but very big. Believe to be 1meg or even more. As games can be loaded from CDs into memory, so the memory must be fairly large. **PROCESSOR:** 8-Bit processor but specially designed, and said to be very fast. Rumours say it run at an amazing 18mhz... but that's very hard to believe. 3 Hudsoft custom-made chips give it all it's power when it comes to the sound & Graphics. All 3 chips are 80-pins!! **RESOLUTION:** 320 x 256 pixels. **COLOUR:** 512 colours and shades. Up to 32 background colours and 32 sprite colours on screen. **SOUND:** 6-channel stereo sound. **SOFTWARE:** Large memory credit card size cartridegs. These range from 2megs to 4megs each. Majority are on 2meg cards, but 3meg ones are becoming more popular. Only Space Harrier has been produced on a 4meg card at the moment, although in Japan, a similar game involving a man with a sword has recently been released on 4meg card. Aswell as cards, CD-Rom games which can store over 500K of information are becoming available. However, due to the high price of the CD-Rom unit & Interface, it isn't very popular. **PORTS & ADD-ONS:** 96-pin Expansion Bus, joystick port, power and TV aerial port. Add on includes Extra Joypads & Sticks, 2-5 player adapters, CD-Rom Unit & Interface. Future add-ons includes a modem (for multi-player games over the phone), and possibly a proper keyboard so it can be converted to a computer. Pictures of the latter have been seen, including a disc drive similar to that of the ninetendo, but no official word have been given on the matter. **SOFTWARE & SUPPORT:** Currently about 25 games available with sevearl games released every month. These include original games and arcade conversions. More companies are beginning to write for the machine, and with the official launch of the engine in the USA, American companies may support it too. The big coin-op firms Irem, Namco, etc. have converted their own games to the Engine. And others like Sega, Taito, Capcom, etc.. have licensed their games to other Engine software producer.

Introduction

As this is the first issue, and the Engine has been available for some time, we can't give full reviews of all games that's available in the UK in this issue. So each month, there will be reviews of current new releases plus reviews of older games from the past. This issue, we have the classic game R-Type I and it's second part - R-Type II, together with some newer games. We also have some helpful hints & Cheats for certain games, information on future releases and when they will be available, review of an alternative controller - the Ascii Stick Engine, a high score chart for you beat, and much more.

The Credits

NEW GAMES IN JAPAN

Helicopter Action

One great looking game that's already released in Japan (31/3/89) is called TIGER HELI , but is a conversion of the Taito coin-op TWIN COBRA - see C+VG Apr.'88. The game is a vertical helicopter shoot'em up with the ability to collect lots of extras. It's similar to Flying Shark but far more difficult, more devastating weaponary and a lot more colourful. The conversion looks very much like the coin-op bar the size of the screen. The coin-op version was 1 or 2 player game - hence the name Twin Cobra, but it is unlikely that the Engine version will have the two player mode. Watch for a full review of this in future issue of PC Engine Fanatics, maybe next month when we get it from Japan. Apparently, most Japanese toy shops have sold out of them!! So it must to Good!

The Freedom Fighters

Another double player coin-op conversion that has been transported to the engine is P*47, which appeared in the arcades last year aswell. The game's a horizontal airplane shoot'em up, again with the ability to collect extra fire-power. The same game has also been licensed for 8/16-bit micros by Mirrorsoft last year, although nothing have been seen of it. But the Engine version looks identical to the coin-op and word is, it plays it too. The game has already been released in Japan, and PC Engine Supplies say they will have it soon. Again, unlikely to have two player option, but just have to wait and see.

New Games in Japan to come

Wrestle Mania

For all wrestling fans, an extremely good looking wrestling game will be released for the Engine in June. Thegame looks very similar to Epyx's with 16 different characters to choose from or fight against. A nice feature is that, not only are the competitors in the ring, but a referee too, in the the usual black and white strip, to keep things in order(?). There are masses of moves, so many that, not only are the two buttons used, but also the RUN button! So, you can preform your favorite moves from a pile driver to a flying drop kick. You can even climb up the top of corner posts, and dive at your opponent, or should it occur - fight outside the ring!!! But what makes it different from other fight games is that, you can also play with a friend in tag-team matches! That's if you have a multi-tap ofcourse. Full review when it's available - look's like a winner.

Namco game

Namcot's next arcade conversion features the most famous computer character Pacman in the game, Pacland which has recently been released on 8 & 16-bit machines. Graphically, Engine pacland looks identical to the coin-op, which really isn't that difficult, and judging by Namcot's previous engine converts (Galaga '88, Dragon Spirit & Tale of the Monster Path), Pacland should be fantastic. Release date for the game is sometime in May.

NEC Avenue Games

From the software side of NEC, looking to be the hottest conversion for the engine, is Taito's Darius. The coin-op was a giant machine, 3 screens long - linked together so you could hardly notice the join. Darius is a one or two player under water shoot'em up with collectable weaponary. And at the end of each level, you must destroy hugh metallic sea creatures, nearly taking up a full screen. These include a lobsters, a sea horse, and a sperm whale. Avenue, have reduced the screen size, as expected, to a single screen but kept the two player option in. Graphically looks identical, and said that, they actually digitised all the graphics from the coin-op. Release date fot this monster is sometime in July. Avenue has also a number of other titles (around 8), one of which is a 3D game and another on CD-Rom.

Naxat Soft Games

Naxat soft, who was responsible for the great pinball game - Alien Crush, has 3 different sport games in the pipeline. The first to come is a golf game called 'Naxat Open' - to be released in May. Currently, from the number of Golf games available fand planned (about 8), it looks like the best of the bunch. It plays a little like leaderboard giving a 3d view and comes on a 3meg card. Also in May, Naxat will release Digital Champ, a boxing game similar to the heavy punishing coin-op - Punch Out. However, instead of the see-through outlin of your fighter close to the screen, Digital Champ only shows your boxing gloves. The game looks very promising... we shall wait and see. Later in July, they will release a pool game. As pool games go, it doesn't look too outstanding as the table is viewed from above.

AND THE REST

Later in the year, Capcom's Tiger Road will be converted to the Engine. As yet, no Engine screen shots have been seen of it nor is there a release date.. but should be a good conversion. Another planned conversion is a up screen shoot'em up. The game looks very similar to the recent coin-op Tatsujin, but graphics look slightly different. Whatever the game, it should be a very good blast! The same company is also programming a horizontal scrolling shoot'em up called Rock On.

The craziest game to be released later in the year is an arcade adventure where you control a small hill-billy/farmer type character who can transform into a beefy hulk man. The game's a normal left/right scroller with a lot of jumping on platforms, killing strange creatures, etc.. similar to Wonderboy. So what's crazy about the game? The enemies are totally wacko! You get confronted by kool pigs carrying rakes and wearing dark shades, men dressed as women on roller skates, and other freaky characters.

With NEC converting Taito's Darius, another of Taito's giant coin-ops will be converted - that of Ninja Warrior. The screen shots we've seen of it looks very good and expected to be released in June.

In the Computer scene, a number of big software houses lisense films to convert them to games. These have included Rambo I+II+III, V, Ghostbusters, and recently converted - The Running Man. The first film based game may soon appear on the Engine called - Gun Hed, to be programmed by Hudson Soft. The film has yet to be finished, and is a science fiction featuring giant robots and could very well be Transformers. We believe the film will be released on July the 22nd (in Japan ofcouse), at the same time as the game. The game itself, is an up screen shoot'em up with many additional weaponary.

Irem games have always been good, and the next game from the company is the cute helicopter game - Mr. Heli. No release date or picture have been given, but Irem corp. should come up trumps.

Pack-In-Video Co.Ltd. have two games already available. One is a racing game similar to REVS or Ferrari Formula 1, called F1-Pilot, which looks terrific but is said to be not as good, and the other is an underwater shoot'em up called Deep Blue.

A game that should be available when you read this is Wonder Mo Mo. This is another beat'em up scrolling arcade adventures, but for a change, your control a cute girl instead, who can change to a *super* girl character. The game doesn't look very fantastic, but I suspect is very playable.

Apart from the Above games, there are a number of adventures and strategy/role play ones. Unless you understand Japanese they won't be much use. Some look fantastic especially the futuristic strategy War Game - Nectaris. Not only do you get the hexagon overlay maps, but close up animated battles. But the most amazing looking games are to be found on CD-Rom format. A number of superb graphic Adventures have been lined up for release on the Engine, all taking advantage of the engine's colour graphics. All have cartoon like graphics that are difficult to tell from drawn pictures on paper.

With so many games, the future looks secure for the engine for a long time!!!

Games Reviews

R-TYPE I+II
Reviewed by O.Lee

R-Type is one game that really shows off the Engines graphics, sounds, and how good arcade conversions can be. The game has now been available for the Engine for over a year, and still no other version on other machines has come close on beating it.

The original coin-op R-Type by Irem was, and still, considered by many, as the best shoot'em up game ever produced. It started a new generation of horizontal scrolling shoot'em ups, first starting with Scramble, then Nemesis and then R-Type. Basically, it's an 8-stage left to right blast against seemingly impossible odds. So to help you out, extra vital weaponary can be collected on the way, from a simple protective ball shield to devastating Ring Lasers. Each stage has a different landscape, obstacle, aliens and robots, and other numerous hazards.

R-Type I has the first 4 stages of the coin-op, while R-Type II has the last 4 - which means, you'll have to buy both if you want the full coin-op.... all 4megs of it. Maybe Hudson soft will produce a 4megs card version, or even put it on CD-Rom?! So how does it compare to the original? Graphically, there's no difference between the two apart from the shades of colour. Sound is also identical, but ofcourse sounds better on the coin-op. BUt what makes R-Type on the engine so good a conversion is in it's playability. Hudson Soft have programmed it so that every sprite follows the same pattern, moves at the same speed and fires the same time. In other words, it's as identical a conversion as it could possibly be. There are two main differences. Firstly, as the TV screen is rectangular, the engine version scrolls up and down slightly to get everything in. The other difference is when a lot of objects are on the screen, or a large object appears like the snake on stage 2, it tends to flicker a bit..... but atlease it doesn't slow down, like the coin-op does.

If you own an Engine, then R-Type is a must - only let down by the price of having to buy both, so costing £60 or above.

On completing level 4 of R-Type I, you are given a code so that you can enter into R-Type II to continue the game with collected weaponary & score.

Graphics	- 95%
Sound	- 95%
Value for Money	- 50%
Playability	- 95%
Overall	- 84%

DUNGEON EXPLORER
Reviewed by O.Lee

Hudson Soft's 15th game is called Dungeon Explorer, programmed by Atlus. The game is very similar to the arcade game Gauntlet, and will work with multi-taps, so up to 5 people can play simutaneously.

Your objective is to look for the magical orb, held by the evil 'Satan Blade' at the end of level 14, and to restore peace throughout the land, now over run by evil creatures. D.E. has 14 giant levels, all with a very nasty BOSS creature at the end of each.

When you start, you can pick a character from a choice of eight. Each character has his/her own strengths and weaknesses, so you can select a very fast thief but weak in weapons and useless in magics, whereas a dwarf has the biggest hit point (strength/energy), but is extremely slow. For beginners and all round abilities, the fighter is well balanced in all fields. If playing with other players, each person must pick a different character.

Whereas Gauntlet, you go from one dungeon to another, D.E. is played on a giant map but must travel through each level - find and defeat the BOSS creature, which will unlock another passage so you can go to the next level. As the playing area is so hugh and stairs lead up/down, you will also need a good sense of direction or you'll get really lost. All the usual gauntlet features are there, like generators which release all manner of nasties, keys needed to open doors, food to increase energy, etc.

Each character can fire normally with a different weapon, and when collected, use two different potions - White & Black. White potions are defensive ones, and Black - Offensive. To switch between the two, the SELECT button is used aswell. Different creatures act differntly too. For example, if Thief, Elf or Dwarf who magics 'Cry of death' as their Black Magic, uses it on Zombies - the Zombies will become MORE harmful, whereas, the other characters magics different black magic will have better results.

Killing each BOSS creature at the end of each level will give you a password, so you can enter it the next time you play without starting from the beginning.

Graphically, D.E. is fantastic with lots of different detailed characters, but colour is rather bleak and sometimes difficult to tell what's what. Sound is also very good, with a variety of neat effects and tunes. Hudson Soft have produced a fantastic game, which all gauntlet fans should try to get hold of. If you do, try to get the multi-tap as playing the game with friends is great fun.

Graphics	- 80%
Sound	- 80%
Playability	- 85%
Value for Money	- 80%
Overall	- 81%

Ofcourse, if you happen to have a multi-tap with required joypads, then the game is a lot more playable. So, the Overall rating should be increased aswell.

GAMES REVIEWS

Dragon Spirit
Review by Onn Lee

This game from Namco is a conversion of their own coin-op game of the same name. Unfortunately, none of us have seen or played the coin-op version, so don't no how it compares. The Story goes: Your fair princess has been captured by an evil monster, and held captive in a fortress far away - 8 levels infact. So, being a heroic person, you venture out to rescue her, and to free your kingdom from all evil. As the fortress is such a great distance away, you have been given the ability to transform into a great blue Dragon so cutting down on the old legs.

You take control of a Dragon flying up screen, which can spit fire in the air or to the ground. As you progress, different type of creatures appear which must be disposed of or dodged. These appear in the air or at ground level and includes birds, bushes, bats, flying fish and sea creatures on the first level, to giant jumping frogs, walruses, Spiders in their webbing, and lizards. Aswell as these creatures, there are other hazards to contend with, like active volcanoes, moving canyons, brick walls, and ice barriers. But to help you on your way, extra weaponary can be collected. Coloured eggs are scattered throughout each stage, which when bombed will reveal an icon, so should be collected. Blue eggs will add an extra head to your Dragon with a maximum of three heads giving a wider range of fire. Red eggs will increase your air fire power.. from the puny single shots to devasting bands of flames like a flame thrower. Aswell as the eggs, certain creatures and objects will appear flashing white. If you shoot these, they will leave different icons. On collecting these, your dragon can either shrink, fire homing flames, speedup, fire 3 way or get 3 life units. If anything hits the dragon, a life unit is lost. 3 life units loss and your dragon's a gonna.

However, extra dragons can be got by collecting pink heart icons. 3 icons are needed for an extra dragon. First one you collect will give you an egg, second will hatch it, and third will add the extra dragon to others remaining. At the end of each stage,

an extra large creature must be killed to continue to the next. On stage 1, you must kill a green sea monster, 2 - a fiery phoenix surrounded by bounders, 3 - a flower throwing plant.... to stage 8 where you'll meet.. well, I won't tell you, I leave it to you to find out for yourself - but make sure you shrink to a small dragon and get some speed-ups as you'll need them. Graphically, Dragon Spirit is excellent in all aspect of the game. Everything is highly detailed and well animated, and not a flicker in sight. Sound is fantastic. If you want to show off the PC Engine's sound capabilities, Dragon Spirit has some of the most amazing pieces of music on any game. It's so good, I'm considering getting the CD version from Japan, called 'Dragon Spirit - Emotional Sound of Namcot' (If I do, I'll offer it as a prize in a competition! - when I've made a few copies of it so that I can blast it through my personal Walkman!!!). The Sound FX is also use to good effect but there aren't many. It would have been nice to hear the roar of the monsters, or screeching of the birds etc. As for playability, shoot'em up fans won't be disappointed - you'll be hooked. Anyone who likes Terra Cresta or Hybris type games will instantly like Dragon Spirit.

Lastability: With 8 stages, it's quite a challenge to complete ... but if and when completed, it's still a game that you'll come back to play as it's so good! I highly recommend Dragon Spirit, if only for the music (awesome in Stereo!), and is currently one of my top 3 PC Engine.

Graphics	- 95%
Sound	- 95%
Value for Money	- 90%
Playability	- 95%
Overall	- 94%

Space Harrier
Review by O.Lee

Sega released the coin-op Space Harrier a few years back, and since then, it has been converted to almost all machines so it's no surprise it should make it to the PC Engine, by NEC Avenue. The coin-op puts you in control of a boy carrying a

heavy-duty blaster which doubles as a propotion device so he can fly around the screen. His objective is to save Fantasy Zone by going through each of the 18 stages destroying everything in his way. The game is viewed in 3D as you run into the screen, avoiding/ destroying the landscape and it's inhabitants ranging from mushrooms, flies, mammoths, to flying robots, space ships and double headed dragons.

The engine version amazingly comes on a 4meg HuCard hence the slight higher cost but features all the stages . Like R-Type, it's as close to the coin-op as it could get, featuring all the same enemies & patterns.

Graphically, it's the same as the original, although, when objects appear close to the screen they are not as large, and sometimes flicker, especially when dragons are about. Another gripe is the checked floor has been replaced by *copper-bar* strips which is a shame as it would have made the game more stunning. Sound is same as the arcade version with great foot-tapping tunes although the speech on it is terrible. Space Harrier isn't the most playable game around, but still extremely good - it's also a lot more playable than the coin-op. Engine Harrier is certainly not as fast as the coin-op, which is one reason why it's easier, but with so many things flying around and obstacles on later stages, it's still a very tough cookie to crack. Space Harrier is a classic game and the Engine version is the best out of all machines bar Sega's 16-bit MegaDrive, so go buy the game!

Graphics	- 90%
Sound	- 85%
Value for Money	- 85%
Playability	- 85%
Overall	- 86%
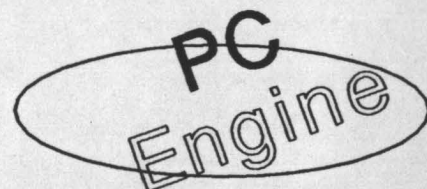
PC Engine

GAMES REVIEWS

Vigilante

Review by D.Pottage

Vigilante is by far a good beat 'em up and it's available for the PC Engine. There are five screens in all, each packed with some real mean doods. Your aim is to travel through these screens and rescue your bird, Madonna who is being held captive by the boss. To reach him you have to
fight your way past knife wielding thugs, gunmen and a couple of blackmen with chains and that's just in one scene. At the end of each level you have to do battle with a 'Mr. Nasty'. One of them being a grenade throwing skinhead!

Graphically, Vigilante is marvellous with some nicely set backdrops and silk smooth animation of the sprites. Players of the coin-op original are gonna be hard pushed to spot any differences, but with a £35 to £45 price tag, they may find there isn't much variety to this game as there are only five screens and with a little practise rescuing Madonna is as easy as ABC.

Graphics	- 92%
Sound	- 88%
Value for Money	- 65%
Playability	- 90%
Overall	- 75%

Victory Run
Review by D.Pottage

When Sega released Outrun it took the arcades by storm, the same happened when it was released for computers (Watch out for the coin-op sequel - Outrun Turbo - it's mega - Onn). Outrun was a designer race sim., with you in charge of a ferrari, everybody's dream car (I prefer a Lamborgini Countach - dig the doors.. Onn).

Now though, pC Engine owners have a race sim., courtesy of Hudson soft, but can it match Outrun? The answer is a mixed one.

Whereas Outrun had you choosing which route to go, Victory Run stays to one route, with you burning rubber in a porsche as a competitor in the Paris Dakar rally. At the start of each game you can allot 20 units among your tyres, suspension, gearbox, engine and brakes, at the end of each stage, you can repair any damage to these components by spending one of your units. From start to finish there are 8 stages, morning noon and night driving, roads and desert and although this seems varied the scenery doesn't actually change much, expect on stage 8 where you race by the sea.

The scrolling of the road is very smooth and in perspective and there are a few features Outrun didn't even have, such as four gears and jumping brows of hills at 180mph. At £27.00, Victory Run is a welcome addition to your collection but don't expect Outrun type gameplay, Victory Run is different in all aspects, it will be nice though, to see how sales differ when Outrun is released later in the year.

Graphics	- 80%
Sound	- 75%
Value for Money	- 80%
Playability	- 85%
Overall	- 80%

Son Son II
Son Son II is based on the Japanese TV series - Monkey - and is the character you control. Your objective is to save your friends who have been kidnapped by a giant unknown creature. Equipped with your trusty staff you set off on your rescue mission.

To reach your goal, Son Son II must travel through 7 stags of terrain inhabited by all sorts of cretures - all trying to stop his quest. Using the joystick, you can move left, right, duck, jump and lunge out with your staff. You have only one life, but an energy bar represent your health, which depletes if you are hit. Son Son can also use magic if available. To do so, you must pause the game by pressing RUN, then by moving stick left and right to select required magic. Unpause game, then on pressing both the I+II fire buttons, that magic will be used. As you go through the stages, killing most creatures will leave fruits and other objects. Collecting the fruits will give you money, which can be used to purchase items from shops dotted around each stage. Other items will increase your health, magic, reduce your money, etc.. At shops, you can buy magic items to use, energy reserves, magic lamps (see Tips), and other useful items.

At the end of each stage (although later levels, they appear within the stages), you'll be confronted with the BOSS creature who must be defeated to continue your journey. On stage 1, a sword wielding Tiger will try to dispose of you. If you have bought the magical pink boulder items, then you can use them to lessen it's energy before poking him with your staff. Other BOSSes includes a floating bee-person, fire breathing dragon with sword, a blue Son Son!, and Axe throwing giants.

Overall, Son Son II is a real fun game with lots of action and hidden items to be found. Graphics are very colourful, detailed and cartoon like. Animation is first class and scrolling is smooth as alway, although jerky when moving up. This is sometimes quite fatal, as you can try to move up too quickly, and hit the top of the screen before the screen shifts. Sound is use to to good effect with some jolly tunes to accomplish each stage. But what makes Son Son II is in it's playability. Like games of this type, there are lots of secret places to go, and different ways to tackle a problem. If you like arcade adventures, especially games like Ghost 'N' Goblins, then you'll love Son Son II. Incidentally, Son Son II is licensed by CAPCOM for NEC Avenue, the producers of G. 'N' G., so that's probably why the game is so good. You'll be hooked!!

Graphics	- 96%
Sound	- 90%
Value for Money	- 90%
Playability	- 96%
Overall	- 93%

TECH - TIPS

VICTORY RUN

As this is a really difficult Racing game, which most of us fail to get pass stage 4, we were surprised to hear that someone had completed the game. The manic driver is Darren Pottage of Staffs. , who can't give much tips on the game, but on the desert stage where you can not grip in first gear, build up your speed to 20km/h then change into second quickly. Also, don't use your gears when you're going, instead, use the accelerator and brake to full advantage.

If You Have Any Hints & Tips, Cheats, Maps, etc. then Please send them in. Can any find how to get 4 screens on Space Harrier? Has anyone got cheats for Legendary Axe, Chan & Chan or Vigilante? *

THE KUNG FU

To Cheat on the first PC Engine game, first switch off your machine. Then turn it on. Hold Down both RUN & SELECT buttons. Then, let go of the RUN button. Push UP once. Release SELECT button. Push UP 3 times. RIGHT 6 times. DOWN 2 times. And finally LEFT 3 times.

If you have done the above correctly, you will be presented with an option screen. Here, you can select either a normal game or become invincible, choose which stage and scene you wish to start the game from, and/or number of lives you wish to have from 3-255.

DRAGON SPIRIT

If you are having trouble getting past a certain level, and wish you continue that game when you lose all your lives, you can! Before starting a game, press both I+II fire buttons on the title screen. A plink sound will be heard telling you that, continue mode is active. If you lose all your lives, you will be able to continue from the beginning of that level. Note that only two continues are given.

Also, if you reset the game 57 times - by holding the RUN key, and tapping the SELECT key 57 times, the screen will close up, giving a long thin screen similar to the arcade coin-op version. With the thin screen, all graphics are adjusted to keep everything the right size, and makes the game a lot playable.

SON SON II

Like Dragon Spirit, there is a way to continue the game on the level you died on. To do so, you must buy the magic Lamp which will cost from 1000 credits. If you have bought it, and get killed, you get the same ending sequence, but a lady genie will be present and I suspect will grant you a wish of life! You will start from the beginning of the level you died on, but still retaining your particular staff and weaponary, but if you've collected a key, that will be lost, so you'll have to collect it again. For some strange reason, it'll turn the game into Black & White! This is not permanent, as tuning the TV again will give you colour back.

Another strange tip for this great game is to play the game with some of the sprites mixed up. To do this, on the title screen, do the following in order: push UP, push DOWN, push LEFT, push RIGHT, press I button, press II button, and finally press RUN button to start. When you start, you'll notice that the cherry has now turned into a skull. Don't worry, collect it - infact, collect ALL skulls. Your first opponent is another 'monkey', - kill him! It's quite confusing, but you seem to get more money, as real skulls are not present... if think not anyway

Chan & Chan

Some Tips on this totally wacko game by Hudson Soft.

a) It's best to pick the younger of the 2 men as he's more controllable.

b) Kick everything at different heights.

c) For more points, when other Chan is throwing cans, jump on the cans, and stay jumping on them until your energy not too low. This usually happens near a door that will give you more energy anyway.

d) If you seem to be unable to go further, try kicking at or on objects to reveal a ledge.

e) Keys are always found on stage *-3. So, if you haven't got a key when you get to *-4, then you know you'll have to go back. The most difficult KEY to find is on stage 4-3. It's found behind the arrow sign next to the lift that takes you from the sewers to the surface.

f) Beware on stage 4-4, if you happen to miss a certain ledge and fall down the hole, you'll be sprung back to stage 2-1!! This can be a right pain, but an advantage if you want to accumulate more lives or score.

g) On collecting the key on stage 3-3, up in the clouds, you can just drop off the cloud to be sprung to the beginning of 3-4. You won't be given a bonus, but atleast you don't have to travel any further to the end of 3-4.

PAL Stereo Sound

The PC Engine is a 6 Channel Stereo sound machine, but with PAL Engines, sound is only mono coming through the TV. The scart interface versions can, so it's only a matter of finding the correct pins on the back of the Engine from the 96-pins. So go ahead and start prodding!! Okay, you might blow your engine up if you do this, so thanks to the guys at PC Engine Supplies, here are the pins.
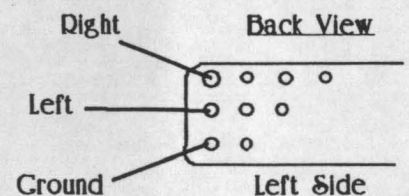
So, by connecting the 'Right' pin to the 'Ground', and the 'Left' pin, again to the ground... you can hook it up to a couple of phono plugs and use the stereo sound inputs of your TV/Monitor, amplifier, or whatever. Best way to attach wires to the pins is to get a broken Atari type joystick, open the D-type plug, and use the connectors in it

Sound is a little low, but in stereo it makes all the difference. You can actually hear all 6 channels playing! Dragon Spirit in stereo is totally awesome!

MISC. PAGE

This Page will contain a mixture of information about anything concerning the console world especially the Engine. Although a number of occasions items may sneak in which have not relevance what so ever with the above!

NINETENDO'S MINI TOY BOY

The NEC PC Engine might be a small games console, but from last April 21st, Ninetendo launched a hand held games console called the Game Boy. The little unit measures 148mm x 90mm x 32mm and will, we suspect run on batteries or through a transformer. The top half of the unit contains a green LCD screen measuring 41mm x 45mm, with a resolution of 144 x 160 pixels, and the bottom half , the control buttons etc. Standard Ninetendo buttons are used with the cross pad controller, two fire buttons , a select and start button. The unit has stereo sound aswell, used in conjunction with stereo headsets so won't disturbed surrounding people. There are currently 4 games available - Super Marioland (a sort of mini Super Mario Brothers), Alleyway (a version of Breakout/arkanoid), a baseball game and a Mai Jong game, where 2 people can play against each other! Price of the console is unknown, but the cartridges should retail in Japan at around £11. But atlast, you will have to pop over to Japan for one, unless someone starts importing them over.

SEGA GOING OVER DRIVE

Sega's 16-bit machine or Mega-Drive is selling like hot cakes in Japan. With 2 processors in the machine (a 7.6MHz 68000 like the Amiga, and a 3.5MHz Z80A a la Speccy) it's extremely fast, and have powerful sound and graphics. Currently there are four games available for it - Altered Beast, Super Thunderblade, Space Harrier II and Alex Kid. But two more games are brewing up. The first is the conversion of the cute game from Taito - The New Zealand Story. Here, you take control of a small Kiwi, in an attempt to rescue his cherpie friends from a evil Walrus. As expected, the game looks identical to the coin-op. The other surprising game is a Strategy War game with the usual hex overlay maps etc... Strategy War games seems to be a hit in Japan now, as seen by the Japanase Engine Chart with Nectaris hitting the no.1 spot, so it's no wonder Sega have produced the game.

Spec	Megadrive	Engine
Colours	512	512
Sound	FM, PSG, & PCM Stereo	PSG Stereo
Ram	72K	?
V-Ram	64K	64K

From this small comparison, it shows how similar an 8-bit Engine compares to a 16-Sega.. wait for 16-bit NEC

MUSIC TO YOUR EARS

With the recent news that, the UK record industry will start producing singles on cassette tape - it seems very likely that, the standard 7" vinyls will disappear all together. But over in Japan where 7" don't exist and CDs are the norm, it isn't surprising that Video game music can be bought on this digital format. Price range around the £12 mark, and are sold in record store along side normal music CDs. The music on them range from all the music

CONTROLLERS

Fed up with your joypad or even joysticks? Well, with Ninentendo having the U-force, power pad, Zoomer and power glove, the Engine seems a mite bit left out, But the Japanese company HORI are out to aid our little white machine with two new controllers. One is the Hori Track - a black sqaure board with the usual buttons and pad, but in one corner sits a trackball. A nice touch is it having both the trackball & pad, as a trackball isn't suitable for all types of games. Cost in Japan is around £17. Hori's other is like an airplane controller. The unit has a square base like a dashboard, and on the front, has a 'U' type handlebar with buttons on top of each end. On the dashboard, green numeric digits are displayed - what these are we don't know exactly, but could be the angle of the controller. Price around £22 in Japan. Hopefully they will appear in the UK soon - not to mention joysticks.

Audio/Video

All engines sold in Japan work with normal TVs (NTSC) and don't sell scart type engines. So what happens when they want to get a better picture or stereo sound? One device is a grey unit which fits on the back of the engine called the Audio Video Booster. This unit has 3 sockets at the back - one for video output, and the other for Left/right sound output for stereo sound. The other device is a RGB interface that also includes a female scart socket, so you can connect it to the scart socket on a TV/Monitor for a sharper picture.

from a single game like R-Type or Dragon Spirit. Or compilations from a producer like Sega, Capcom or Irem. For example, Sega's Greatest hits, could include Outrun, Afterburner, Power Drift, and Super Hang On. Most of these are from coin-op games and re-produced in glorious stereo. This really shows how crazy the japanese are about video games, but also shows what taste they have in music.

As for music on the PC Engine, we rate *Dragon Spirit* as having the best music pieces of all current Engine games. The music on *Legendary Axe* (review next issue), is also fantastic, especially on stage 3b, and the real kool beats on the Demon scenes on *Tale of the Monster Path* is real mean too.

Talking of music, on Space Harrier's bonus stages, if you pause, you can hear all the short unlooping tune, which goes silent once it reaches the end. Interesting eh?!

THE CHARTS

As this is the first Issue, we don't have a proper Engine games chart, so please let us know what your current favorite games are for the next chart.

Below is the Japanese Chart ending Feb. '89. We don't know if the chart is based on user's favorite games or top games being sold that month. Whatever the case, I would very much doubt that the UK chart to be the same considering Nectaris is a futuristic strategy War game requiring the player to understand japanese. Surprisingly, the CD-Rom game Fighting Street is at number 9, showing how many people have CD-Roms in Japan.

No.	Game Title	Distributors	Type
1	NECTARIS	Hudson Soft	STG
2	SON SON II	NEC Avenue	AAV
3	VIGILANTE	Irem	ABU
4	DRAGON SPIRIT	Namcot	ASU
5	MOTO ROADER	NCS	ARC
6	SPACE HARRIER	NEC Avenue	ASU
7	?	Hudson Soft	?
8	R-TYPE II	Hudson Soft	ASU
9	FIGHTING STREET	Hudson Soft	ABU
10	?	Hudson Soft	?

We don't know what numbers 7 & 10 are as they were in japanese but I suspect they are adventure type games.

STG - Strategy Game
AAV - Arcade Adven.
ABU - Arcade Beat'em
ASU - Arcade Shoot'em
ARC - Arcade Racing Car
ADV - Adventures

The Current top 3 games owned by Engine users from the people we know are :

1. R-Type I
2. Victory Run
3. Chan + Chan

but hotting up to take the top spot could well be Son Son II as it's considered to be the most playable game for the engine. And should the current hottest japanese release appear in the UK - Tiger Heli, it may well beat the rest. Let us know what games you own!

Aswell as the Software charts, here are some hi-scores. If you beat any of these, or get a high score on any other game, then please send them in. Who will become the Engine Mega games player?

Alien Crush		-	79,080,400	-	O.Lee
Dragon Spirit	[C]	-	468,980	-	O.Lee
Galaga '88	[C]	-	436,490	-	J.Saunders
R-Type I+II	[C]	-	973,300	-	O.Lee
Space Harrier		-	16,986,500	-	O.Lee
Son Son II		-	500,550	-	O.Lee
The Kung Fu	[C]	-	450,000	-	D.Cheung
Vigilante	[C]	-	13,520	-	D.Pottage
Wonderboy....		-	115,700	-	O.Lee

[C] - Completed

Also, D.Pottage has completed Victory Run, and the best I've done on Shanghai is the complete each game 3 times in a row.

Compiled by O.Lee.

16-Bit Micro Golden Joystick Award

EMAP's Golden Joystick Awards was held at Kensington Roof Gardens, London on April 6th this year, and went to the following :
(Runners-up are in Brackets)

Best Graphics - Rocket Ranger (Startglider II)
Best Soundtrack - International Karate (Starglider II)
Programmer of the Year - The Bitmap Bros. (John Philips)
Best Simulation - Falcon (Interceptor)
Best Adventure - Fish! (Corruption)
Best Coin-Op/Conversion - Operation Wolf (Pac-Mania)
Software House of the Year - Mirrorsoft (Ocean)
Game of the Year - Speedball (Starglider II)

NEXT MONTH : For Only 50p -
More News on the latest games & add-ons for the PC Engine.
More Reviews - Hopefully - Tiger Heli, P-47, The Legendary Axe, Mr. Shoobobi Man, and much more.
Lots of Tech Tips - How to deal with all those nasties in Dragon Spirit, Cheats for Dungeon Explorer, Chan & Chan, Galaga '88, Son Son II, etc.
.... And anything else we can cram in.

ASCII STICK ENGINE

Since the Ninetendo appeared, all consoles from japan have come with controller pads, which most people find very difficult to use. The pads are bundled with the console because they are cheap to produce than joysticks, but Sega's Megadrive's strange controller seems too high tech! The Engine's Controller pad is an unusual device, as, not only will that one port control one pad, but with a 5-player Multi-tap, that one port can be used with 5 controllers. But what about Joysticks? There are several sticks available in Japan.... one of which is the Ascii Stick Engine from the Tokyo based corporation ASCII.

The Joystick is really a joyboard, measuring approx. 7.5 inches by 6 inches. The back is 1.5inches high, and slopes down to half an inch, giving a great feel to it. Infact, the board looks very similar to Euromax's own white Joyboard. The board itself is all black including the stick, with green buttons and 4 rubber pads on the bottom to grip all surfaces very well. The stick is positioned on the left with all buttons on the right. The stick itself has a metal shaft and feels good, just like a coin-op machine. The two fire buttons are angled at 45 degrees and are as large as a 5p piece. They are both spring loaded and nice to use, if a little loose. Not only that, but above each button, there are small red lights which light up when the buttons are pressed. The other two buttons - the select and Run, are positioned in the top corner and easily accessible. Aswell, as these buttons there are two knobs and a two stage button. The two knobs are the auto-fire controllers. When using these you can control the rate the buttons are pressed when you hold them now. But the best feature of the stick, is the last button - SLOW motion. If used, the button will toggle the RUN button rapidly. As the run button is usually used as a pause button, toggling it will slow the game down. This is especially useful for playing R-Type as you can easily see the bullets and have time to avoid them.

So, overall, The ascii Stick Engine is a terrific joystick and definately worth getting if you can get hold of one. I got mine from Japan, which retailed for around £25. Once you've used it, you'll never want to go back to the joypad - although Alien Crush is not exactly made for the Stick.

Review by O.Lee

CD ROMS

The major add-on for your Engine has got to be the CD-Rom Unit, but at around £450 - £500 for the unit plus interface, it's rather an expensive device. Over in Japan, you can pick them up for as little as £260, so it's quite amazing how much they cost over here. The CD-Rom unit is really like a high capacity disk drive, and will hold around 540 Megabytes of memory on a single Compact Disc. Not surprisingly, there aren't many games for it, as it would take a long time to fill all that memory. The first game to appear on this format is Fighting Street (or Street Fighter), Capcom's multi-stage beat'em up. The game itself plays very well like the coin-op with good graphics, but what makes the game, is the sounds. Each stage is accompanied by a different tune which sounds amazing, and also digitized sound effects & speech. Other games that's available includes a Trivia game based on characters from Wonderboy, No-Ri-Ko - a puzzle strategy game with lots of digitized pictures of a japanese girl who, you must make into a pop star, and several fantastic cartoon quality graphic adventures. Best of the bunch is one based in outer space with gloriuos graphics. Future games includes the popular Role playing game 'Ys', Taito's Rainbow Island (June), couple more graphic adventures, a cute two player arcade adventure with large colourful graphics like the original Wonderboy, a Golf game, and possible the arcade version of Tetris.,